



Fact Sheet

SS/HS Is Building Communities

The total number of cooperative relationships between Poudre School District and outside agencies grew from 15 in January 2001 [when the SS/HS grant began] to 41 in May 2003. (Grant evaluator, Poudre SS/HS initiative, Larimer County, CO)

Prior to this program, school counselors would need to look within the community for referrals, and might be referring to many different practitioners. Now they are referring to the providers through the Safe Schools/Healthy Students initiative, and there is more of a unified plan of care. (Project coordinator, San Antonio SS/HS initiative, San Antonio, TX)

New partnerships [made possible by SS/HS] have put resources in our schools that are more accessible to families and are focused on the kind of support kids really need to make it in school and society. (Community partner, San Juan SS/HS initiative, Carmichael, CA)

The Pinnacle Program has touched every child, every mom, and every neighbor in the community. We have done so much in really infiltrating where our kids are in school, after school, evenings, Saturdays, and Sundays at church. Outreach is one of our powerful components. (Project director, Weslaco SS/HS initiative, Weslaco, TX)

For the Safe Schools/Healthy Students (SS/HS) Initiative, three Federal agencies—the U.S. Departments of Education, Health and Human Services, and Justice—have come together in a unique collaboration to reduce violence and substance abuse among our youth. In turn, these partnerships are being forged among people and organizations at the local level.

In communities nationwide, school districts are now working with mental health agencies, law enforcement officials, and community-based social service and faith organizations to provide programs and services for youth, teachers, staff, and families. Realizing the vision of the SS/HS Initiative, these unique collaborative coalitions are promoting prevention services within the walls of our schools.

The faces of SS/HS are many, but the vision is one—safe schools, healthy students.

Faces of SS/HS: Poudre, CO

The Poudre School District, a suburban site located 55 miles north of Denver, has 42 schools that serve 23,000 students from established neighborhoods, areas of new housing, and rural and mountain areas, both in Fort Collins and Larimer County. While the high-tech industry, agriculture, and Colorado State University contribute to the economic base, the two largest and fastest growing industries in Larimer County (services and retail) are also the two poorest paying, on average. Families in these areas are often isolated due to lack of affordable transportation and childcare as well as differences in linguistic literacy and cultural background. With an aim to bridge the district's severe service gaps for children and families by creating new linkages across new and current systems, Project Link was formed as a collaborative effort among school districts, local law enforcement, community mental health agencies, and other community nonprofits. Funded in 2000, Project Link focuses on fostering and building violence prevention strategies into existing school system and community infrastructure.